

I Claim:

1. An aqueous composition for cleaning contact lenses, comprising an effective amount of an anionic chitosan derivative that is soluble in aqueous solutions at a pH of 6.5 to 8.5 and is capable of complexing with lysozyme as a result of ionic interactions, and an ophthalmically acceptable aqueous vehicle for said chitosan derivative.

2. A composition according to Claim 1, wherein the chitosan derivative has a molecular weight of 500 to 10,000,000 Daltons.

3. A composition according to Claim 1, wherein the chitosan derivative is selected from the group consisting of sulfuryl chitosan, phosphoryl chitosan, carboxymethyl chitosan, dicarboxymethyl chitosan, succinyl chitosan, and combinations thereof.

4. A composition according to Claim 1, wherein the chitosan derivative comprises carboxymethyl chitosan.

5. A composition according to Claim 1, wherein the composition is a multi-purpose solution for cleaning and disinfecting contact lenses.

6. A composition according to Claim 1, wherein the composition is a product for rewetting contact lenses.

7. A method of treating a contact lens, which comprises applying a cleaning composition to the lens, said composition comprising an effective amount of an anionic chitosan derivative that is soluble in aqueous solutions at a pH of 6.5 to 8.5 and is capable of complexing with lysozyme as a result of ionic interactions, and an ophthalmically acceptable aqueous vehicle for said chitosan derivative.

8. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the chitosan derivative has a molecular weight of 500 to 10,000,000 Daltons.

9. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the chitosan derivative is selected from the group consisting of sulfuryl chitosan, phosphoryl chitosan, carboxymethyl chitosan, dicarboxymethyl chitosan, succinyl chitosan, and combinations thereof.

10. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the chitosan derivative comprises carboxymethyl chitosan.

11. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the composition is a multi-purpose solution for cleaning and disinfecting contact lenses.

12. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the composition is a product for wetting contact lenses.